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District of Arizona
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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
May 21, 1999

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11 INDICTED FOR INVOLVEMENT IN STASH HOUSE DRUG OPERATION

PHOENIX, ARIZONA --José de Jesus Rivera, United States Attorney for the District of Arizona, and Thomas Raffanello, Special Agent in Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration, announce today that a federal grand jury at Phoenix, Arizona returned a six count indictment today against **CLIFTON BLAKE, BALDWIN ROSE, COURTNEY TAYLOR, DAVID RICHARDO, CLIVE LAIDLEY, DEAN BROWN, JESSE FORD, KENYA TRAYLOR, GLASBERT GREEN, ERNESTO MONTGOMERY, and RICHARD CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS** for attempting to distribute approximately 1,000 kilograms (2,200 lbs) of marijuana.

"Arizona has become a "gateway" for the repackaging of illegal drugs that are destined for the East Coast" says Raffanello. "Drug dealers use "stash" houses in Arizona to warehouse the contraband while it is repackaged and broken down into smaller shipments for distribution across the country."

The above named defendants are charged with one count of Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Marijuana, five counts of Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana, and Aiding and Abetting.

The indictment alleges that the defendants obtained, and directed others to obtain, marijuana from individuals in Phoenix, Arizona. The defendants would then repackage the marijuana in various stash houses, they rented or bought in Phoenix, Arizona, in preparation for distribution in New York. Starting on approximately January 1, 1995, the defendants shipped marijuana from Phoenix, Arizona, to New York, New

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York, using Airborne Express and other courier/mail services. The defendants set up business accounts using false names and then would ship 30 to 60 pound boxes, containing drugs, several times per week.

It is also alleged that in January 1997, **BLAKE, ROSE, TAYLOR, RICHARDO, LAIDLEY**, and **BROWN** began using tractor trailers to transport marijuana from Phoenix, Arizona to New York, New York. In October 1997, it is alleged that **BLAKE, ROSE**, and **TAYLOR** directed an individual to transport \$286,000 in cash, from New York to Phoenix, for the purchase of marijuana that would ultimately be distributed in New York.

A forfeiture allegation is included in the indictment and identifies \$4 million dollars as potential proceeds from the illegal activity. Therefore, if convicted, the defendant's would be required to criminally forfeit all property and cash derived from the illegal activity.

ROSE, TAYLOR, LAIDLEY, BROWN, MONTGOMERY, GREEN, and **PHILLIPS** have been arrested and are currently in custody. **FORD** and **TRAYLOR** have been arrested and released on bond. **BLAKE** and **RICHARDO** are fugitives.

BLAKE, TAYLOR, ROSE, RICHARDO, LAIDLEY, MONTGOMERY, PHILLIPS and **GREEN** are of Jamaican citizenship.

The federal indictment charges the defendants with Conspiracy to Possess with Intent to Distribute Marijuana, Possession with Intent to Distribute Marijuana, and Aiding and Abetting, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 846, 841(a)(1), and 2. A conviction for these charges carries a maximum penalty of 10 years imprisonment, a \$4 million dollar fine, or both (per count).

Mr. Rivera stressed that an indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and an individual's guilt is only established upon conviction.

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The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration with invaluable assistance from the Glendale Police Department and Tempe Police Department.

The prosecution is being handled by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR-99-192-PHX-SMM

RELEASE NUMBER: 99060

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